

From: Bridgewater Family
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/27/02 2:20am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I was visiting at Netscape, as a customer, the day after they first met with Microsoft. There was no doubt that they had been surprised and somewhat taken aback with Microsoft's tone. Based on what we were told, Microsoft offered to partner with them and divide the world into PCs and non-PCs with Microsoft getting the PC world and Netscape getting what was left. Netscape says they turned them down and Microsoft left them with the impression that they would be put out of business. At that time and subsequently I believe that Netscape had a much clearer vision and was as interested in driving the Internet as they were in growing and making money. Microsoft, clearly, has no other interest than market domination and maximizing profits in any way they can. Microsoft has no interest in advancing the Internet or, indeed, any aspect of computer science, utilization, security or performance.

Microsoft is not an engine of advancement or change. There is not one product or service they can point to and say they invented or developed it. Their history has been to purchase or drive out of business any competitor and then blanket the market segment with proprietary code to prevent anyone else trying to enter that market. This is not a forward looking strategy -- it is the road to stagnation. Established product lines do not move in new ways, they fester under an ever increasing load of new, largely useless, features: all the components of Microsoft Office fall in this category; Internet Explorer is well on the way; XP is not only enormous and slow, it comes with one of the most repressive licensing schemes since indentured servitude.

But, it is Microsoft's arrogance and complete lack of ethics that has prompted me to write. The Justice Department, et. al. settlement left me speechless. No mention that Microsoft has been convicted of breaking the law (which was upheld on appeal). No mention of their bad faith in answering subpoenas or goading a Federal Judge into making non-judicial

statements in a fit
of pique. Indeed, someone from another planet who read this would wonder
what the fuss was about.

The idea of three people living and working at the Microsoft campus and
keeping an eye on them is
ludicrous on the face of it. How can they ever know what is going on?
Where is the restructuring that
is clearly indicated from their actions? Where is any notion of making
their former competitors whole?
Where, for pity sakes, is any discouraging word?

I think breaking the company up, opening up at least their interfaces so
there can be some real
possibility of competition and imposing some real punishments --
community service at a minimum --
will ever convince them that perhaps they have erred. Otherwise, they
will simply have a giant
celebration on the day this becomes final and laugh off the rest of the
industry forever.

Sincerely,

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